

## Comparative regional patterns in electoral gender quota adoption: a social network approach

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Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version  
Arbeitspapier / working paper

### Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Clayton, A. (2016). *Comparative regional patterns in electoral gender quota adoption: a social network approach*. (KFG Working Paper Series, 71). Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin, FB Politik- und Sozialwissenschaften, Otto-Suhr-Institut für Politikwissenschaft Kolleg-Forschergruppe "The Transformative Power of Europe". <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-462170>

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# Comparative Regional Patterns in Electoral Gender Quota Adoption: A Social Network Approach

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Amanda Clayton

No. 71 | February 2016



Freie Universität



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Clayton, Amanda 2016: Comparative Regional Patterns in Electoral Gender Quota Adoption: A Social Network Approach, KFG Working Paper Series, No. 71, February 2016, Kolleg-Forscherguppe (KFG) “The Transformative Power of Europe”, Freie Universität Berlin.

ISSN 1868-6834 (Print)

ISSN 1868-7601 (Internet)

This publication has been funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG).

Freie Universität Berlin

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# COMPARATIVE REGIONAL PATTERNS IN ELECTORAL GENDER QUOTA ADOPTION:

## A SOCIAL NETWORK APPROACH

Amanda Clayton

### Abstract

To date, more than 100 countries have implemented some type of quota for women in their national legislatures, leading to one of the most significant developments in the global composition of legislative bodies in the past twenty-five years. One remaining puzzle in understanding the global diffusion of electoral gender quotas is the strong clustering of shared domestic quota policies by region. In this project, I examine the importance of dyadic relationships between countries, including shared membership in inter-governmental organizations (IGOs), regional organizations (ROs), and women's international non-governmental organizations (WINGOs) in explaining the timing and type of quota adoption. To do this, I employ a social network approach to quantitatively model global and temporal trends in gender quota adoption. Controlling for other possible domestic and transnational determinants, my results indicate that the strongest predictor of quota policy adoption and design is the existence of similar policies in neighboring countries. These results suggest that, in the case of gender quota adoption, domestic policymakers see surrounding states as their most salient reference group when deciding both whether and how to implement new policy.

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## 1. Introduction: The Puzzle

Currently 110 countries have implemented some type of quota for women in their domestic political structures, leading to one of the most significant developments in the global composition of legislative bodies in the past twenty years. These quotas have emerged in every region of the world, often in surprising places, with transformative results for the number of women in politics. Rwanda, for instance, which reserves seats in both its upper and lower houses for women, has received international praise for superseding Sweden as first in the world in women's parliamentary representation, with 64 percent of its total seats held by women against Sweden's 45 percent.

Women's global level of political representation has increased rapidly alongside the institution of gender quotas. In 1995, women constituted only ten percent of the world's parliamentarians, a figure that has more than doubled in the last twenty years. Although there have been variations in the implementation of quota policies, on average, these provisions have led to an immediate and substantial increase in the number of female parliamentarians. In 2014, on average, female representation in single or lower houses of parliament stood at 27 percent among countries with an enforced gender quota versus 15 percent in countries without quotas.<sup>1</sup>

With a few notable exceptions (see Krook 2006, 2009; Bush 2011; Towns 2012; Hughes et al. 2015), most research on the adoption of electoral gender quotas has focused on the experiences of individual cases. Additionally, the few cross-national studies that have emerged in recent years have operationalized transnational actors through country-level variables. Indeed, although research on quota diffusion often theorizes about the role of international, transnational, and regional networks in domestic policy adoption, to date no study has explicitly modeled networks of relationships between countries as a way to explain the timing and type of quota adoption. Here, I present a social network approach to explicitly model policy adoption as a function of structural relationships between countries, which places primacy on the role of regional and international networks in explaining the timing and type of parliamentary gender quota adoption.

In this paper, I test the diffusion of policy adoption as well as quota policy design (including modeling "no quota" as a distinct policy choice). Electoral gender quotas, defined as mandatory or targeted percentages of women candidates for public elections, can be adopted into domestic political structures in myriad ways. Gender quotas most often take the following three forms. First, reserved seat quotas set aside a certain number of seats in parliaments of subnational legislatures for women provided under constitutional or legislative law. Second, legislated candidate quotas reserve a number of places on electoral lists for female candidates as stipulated by constitutional or legislative law. Third, voluntary political party quotas are rules or targets set by political parties to include a certain percentage of women as election candidates.

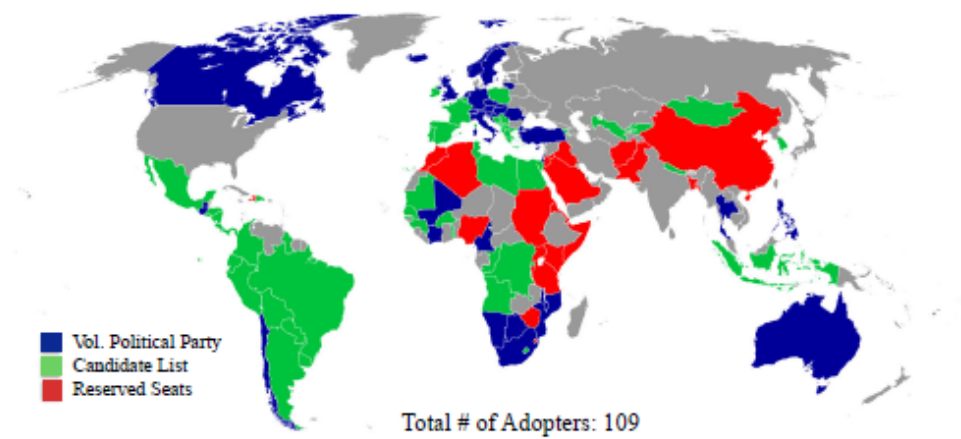
One pattern that has emerged in the rapid diffusion of quota policies is the general prominence of legislated candidate quotas in Latin America, voluntary party quotas in Western Europe, and reserved seat

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1 Data from the Quota Project Database and the Inter-Parliamentary Union database online.

systems in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. The map of electoral gender quota policies in states' single or lower houses of parliament in Figure 1 reveals these distinct regional patterns.

*Figure 1: Map of Quota Type (in a Single or Lower House of Parliament) by Country in 2014*



*Source:* Author. Data from the Quota Project.

Although quota research has both noted and theorized about the origins of these regional patterns (Bauer 2008; Krook 2009), explanations for the geographic clustering of quota policies have yet to be systematically tested. I take the spatial clustering of quota policies as a motivating puzzle and propose a way to differentiate among possible explanations of quota adoption that highlights the role of international and regional organizations, a state's position in the global structure, as well as domestic-level variables.

This paper proceeds as follows: Section 2 lays out several hypotheses from the quota and diffusion literature, which may account for the strong regional clustering of shared quota policies. Section 3 presents the data and social network approach used to model global interdependence in quota adoption, using both an outcome variable of quota adoption versus non-adoption as well as the more convergence focused outcome of shared policy type. Section 4 presents the main results, and Section 5 discusses how they relate to theoretical expectations from different accounts of quota diffusion. The final section concludes.

## 2. International Policy Diffusion: The Case of Gender Quotas

### 2.1 *Inter-State Explanations*

This work employs a fairly standard definition of diffusion – namely, diffusion occurs when a practice by one actor alters the probability of its adoption by another (Strang 1991; Franzese/Hays 2008; Maggetti/Gilardi 2016). Related particularly to international policy diffusion, Simmons et al. (2006: 787) note that “[i]nternational policy diffusion occurs when government policy decisions in a given country are systematically conditioned by prior policy choices made in other countries.” Diffusion scholars also largely agree

that diffusion represents a process rather than a convergence towards a particular policy outcome (Elkins/Simmons 2005; Börzel/Risse 2009) – a distinction this work also seeks to address.

The rich case-based literature on quota adoption indicates that the regional clustering of quota polices is related to interdependent processes rather than the common domestic features of quota adopters. This observation has a clear backing in the diffusion literature, which theorizes that states – national or subnational – are more likely to introduce new domestic policies when they observe policy adoption in surrounding states. Diffusion scholars have provided substantial theoretical underpinnings to explain Tobler’s Law that “near things are more closely related than far things.” First, the act of policy adoption enables nearby observers to learn about potential new policies (Berry/Berry 1990; Berry/Baybeck 2005) and can provide important information regarding the political costs versus the substantive benefits of adoption (Simmons/Elkins 2004; Mooney 2001; Gleditsch/Ward 2006). Further, proximate states tend to share cultural, socio-economic, and political characteristics that make them excellent “laboratories” for observing the likely effects of particular policy choices (Elazar 1972; Mooney 2001).

Whereas states may observe the experiences of their neighbors through a rational learning process, they may also be more susceptible to processes of emulation and heuristic shortcuts when policy changes happen in their backyard. Weyland (2005: 23-24) succinctly describes this process as follows:

*The availability heuristic makes people pay disproportionate, excessive attention to especially proximate, vivid, striking and memorable events [...] The availability heuristic gives innovations designed by a neighboring country special weight because they are more concretely available than changes made halfway around the globe.*

Further, through a different mechanism, domestic elites may be more likely to see neighboring states as potential competitors for access to official development assistance (ODA) or other financial markets, which they perceive as based on their willingness to embrace Western ideals (Gleditsch/Ward 2006: 921). Particularly when Western ODA budgets are finite, poorer states may compete for the privilege of “aid darling” through signaling to the international community their commitment to democratic legitimacy and women’s rights (see, for instance, Longman (2006) on this occurrence in Rwanda). Related to a more normative idea of competition, Towns (2012) argues that quota adoption may stem from the attempts of domestic elites to gain social prestige by adopting “modern” policies as compared to states in their reference group.

Finally, it is possible that both local and regional quota activists may have more success when drawing policy comparisons with countries in the same region. The experience of nearby cases may have more resonance in attempting to persuade policymakers than comparisons with more distant countries. These accounts, all related to the ways in which geographic proximity facilitates standard diffusion processes, all lead to the following hypothesis:

*H1: States in near geographic proximity will have similar quota adoption patterns.*



A recent argument, however, emerging from both substantive and methodological subfields of the diffusion literature, stresses that “space is more than geography” (Beck et al. 2006). That is, the pathways along which interdependence operates may extend beyond simple physical distance and bordering. Instead, a state’s “neighborhood” may be more related to its position within global networks – for instance, trade or IGO networks (Lubell et al. 2012; Simmons/Elkins 2004). Similar to the neighborhood effects described above, participation in global networks, particularly in IGO networks that explicitly seek to promote shared policy, reduces the transaction costs associated with policy learning and emulation.

First, IGOs may promote state learning as they facilitate the flow of information between member states as well as provide forums for government cooperation (Keohane 1984; Chayes/Chayes 1998). Second, even though it is seldom their primary function, IGOs often actively involve themselves in promoting good governance and human rights, and provide incentives for member states to improve in these areas. IGOs, then, both provide member states with a mechanism to express credible commitments to a particular policy or behavior (Moravcsik 2000), as well as provide precedents that local activist groups can use to pressure states for policy reform from below (Keck/Sikkink 1998). Third, related to processes of emulation, IGOs may socialize member states on the appropriateness of a particular type of policy or behavior by legitimating collective decisions (Finnemore 1996; Strang/Meyer 1993). In this way, IGOs may act as norm entrepreneurs as members form new domestic conceptions of identity through the phases of imitation, socialization, and internalization (Finnemore/Sikkink 1998).

Indeed, several successful domestic quota campaigns have been associated with sustained pressure from local civil society groups concerned with women’s rights that have pressured domestic political structures with tools from international or regional treaties. These “boomerang effects” and “spiral models” pull from a now well-established literature that suggests that domestic groups use international pressure to spur state-level policy adoption (Keck/Sikkink 1998; Risse-Kappen et al. 1999). Related to gender quotas (see Towns 2012), as well as other gender equality campaigns (True/Mintrom 2001; Htun/Weldon 2012), scholars have documented how local, regional, and transnational feminist networks may initiate the first move towards new gender equality norms, which then affects how local activists legitimate and frame their policy demands in domestic advocacy campaigns.

The ability of domestic groups to take advantage of international pressure to affect local quota campaigns depends on at least two conditions. First, global scripts and norms must be aligned with the goals of domestic groups (see Sikkink 2011). By all accounts, international development bodies have put increasing emphasis in recent decades on the central role of women’s rights in promoting both economic development and democratic governance – for instance, through the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action (PFA), both initiated by the United Nations. Further, increasingly over the past years international organizations have explicitly recommended the use of electoral gender quotas to promote women’s political representation, including their involvement in post-conflict reconstruction (Krook 2009; Bush 2011). Second, to take advantage of international pressure to effect domestic change, states must be deeply embedded (or desire to be more embedded) in the world polity. This has led some scholars to theorize that states with stronger ties to international governmental organizations (IGOs) and international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs), which diffuse and promote human rights principles globally, will be more likely to adopt international

standards promoted by the world polity, such as the use of electoral gender quotas (Hughes 2009).<sup>2</sup> This leads to the following hypothesis:

*H2: States with high levels of shared IGO membership will have similar quota adoption patterns.*

Recent work, however, has begun to recognize that not all IGO membership is equal. That is, shared membership in IGOs with certain characteristics may be more important to diffusion processes than overall IGO membership (Pevehouse/Russett 2006; Hafner-Burton/Montgomery 2006). Related to gender quotas, we might expect the mechanisms described above to be most pronounced when members share common ties within transnational networks of women's international non-governmental organizations (WINGOs). WINGOs often explicitly pressure member states to uphold commitments to quotas, monitor member commitments, and provide resources and institutional support for their successful implementation (Towns 2012; Hughes et al. 2015). This leads to a corollary of Hypothesis 2 above, namely:

*H2a: States with high levels of shared WINGO membership will have similar quota adoption patterns.*

Related to the idea that cumulative membership in IGOs may be less important than specific types of membership, the strong clustering of shared quota policies by region suggests that regional inter-governmental organizations (ROs) may have a particular importance. Börzel et al. (2013: 23) provide a useful theoretical framework for understanding under what conditions ROs will be able to influence the domestic policies of member states. This schema includes both the demands of individual states and the supply (standards, instruments) provided by available ROs. Several aspects of this actor-centered schema are helpful in understanding how ROs may or may not promote quota adoption in member states. First, related to potential state demands, as noted above, states may see quotas both as a signal of international legitimacy, as well as a gesture that may attract external donors and investors that care about a commitment to gender equality. Committing to regional treaties and protocols may provide states another outlet for these signals.

Regional organizations have adopted various standards and instruments on the subject of gender quotas. Whereas none of the major regional organizations take gender equality reforms as a prerequisite for entrance nor offer explicit sanctions for a lack of commitment to gender equality, many ROs still involve themselves with this area of human rights and good governance (see Börzel et al. 2013: Annex 1). For instance, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has lobbied heavily for the adoption of gender quotas in member states, including pressuring members to sign legally binding policy statements to ensure gender parity in political decision-making. The Organization of American States (OAS), on the other hand, strongly endorses quotas to achieve gender parity in political bodies as well, but has not taken explicit measures to compel member states to comply.

Not only do regional organizations promote local standards of legitimate governance, they may also act as intermediaries, translating and adapting global scripts to create new regional norms (see Acharya 2004). Related to quotas, both CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action have been critical in empowering regional actors to lobby for increased female representation in politics. For instance, in forming their Protocol

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<sup>2</sup> But see Hughes et al. (2015).

on Gender and Development, a SADC report notes, “The Beijing Platform and CEDAW have contributed to the emergence of a regional consensus on policy goals, such as ensuring at least 30 percent representation of women at all levels of power and decision-making” (Kandawasvika-Nhundu 2003: 1). The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development agreed to by the regional body in 2008 increased the previous target of 30 percent to 50 percent. Since ratification, this document has been the most influential legal instrument in sustaining quota campaigns in Southern Africa and is often referred to by domestic political leaders and policy documents related to increasing women’s participation in domestic political structures. Indeed, SADC’s Regional Women’s Parliamentary Caucus regularly engages in lobbying and advocacy missions with the stated goal of sensitizing local civil society groups and political parties to the goal of attaining 50 percent representation of women in political decision-making positions. On lobbying trips timed prior to major elections, the group, which includes civil society delegates and MPs from member states, meets with local political parties and civil society groups to pressure domestic stakeholders to uphold the Declaration, specifically through the use of quotas. This leads to a final hypothesis related to the emergence of regional diffusion patterns in the timing and type of electoral gender quotas.

*H3: States with high levels of shared RO membership will have similar quota adoption patterns.*

## 2.2 Alternative Explanations

Quota scholars have also noted domestic conditions under which quota adoption is more likely. First, quota adoption may be related to existing or emerging domestic notions of equality and representation through incremental changes in women’s rights. Modernization theorists predict that as countries industrialize and women enter the workforce, fertility levels will decrease, female literacy and education will increase, and gender attitudes in society will shift. This process leads both to changing attitudes toward the role of women in political decision-making, as well as the emergence of domestic groups concerned with women’s rights as women become a more politically salient group (Inglehart/Norris 2003; Iversen/Rosenbluth 2010). This variant of modernization theory, then, predicts that women’s claims to gender equality in political decision-making, and thus domestic demand for gender quota policies, stem from incremental economic and cultural advances in women’s rights.

It should be noted, however, that a casual observation of the diffusion of quota policies in recent years reveals anomalies with this prediction. Although voluntary political party quotas in northern Europe were largely the result of increasingly progressive views toward gender equality (and were adopted at first only by leftist parties), quota adoption outside of Europe has shown a distinctly divergent trend. In clear contradistinction to European experiences, countries with some of the worst records on women’s rights in other dimensions of economic, political, and social life have adopted electoral gender quotas into their parliamentary structures in the last decade (e.g. Somalia, Sudan, Pakistan, and Afghanistan). Saudi Arabia, for instance, adopted a reserved seat gender quota in 2011, before women had the legal right to vote in parliamentary elections. The observation that many countries adopt gender quotas before they have made significant strides towards gender equality in other areas suggests that political elites may be responding to international incentives and cues for quota adoption rather than shifts in domestic attitudes towards women’s rights.

Additionally, electoral systems are often a significant and substantial predictor of quota adoption and design. Reserved seat systems are most popular in majoritarian electoral systems whereas candidate list quotas and voluntary political party quotas are most common in proportional systems because they correspond most closely with the institutional designs of the electoral systems already in place. Anecdotal observation also suggests that levels of democratization are associated with different quota policy choices. Whereas voluntary political party quotas are most common in long-established democracies, candidate list quotas appear most often in recent democracies, and reserved seat policies are most common in authoritarian, semi-authoritarian, or hybrid regimes. Indeed, reserved seat quotas are often the most difficult to justify as democratically legitimate, as they either involve processes through which representatives are appointed after general elections by political party elites (as in Zimbabwe), or create women-only districts barring men from competition (as in Uganda).

Finally, global hegemons may use coercive measures to compel states to adopt quota policies that are aligned with their own self-interest or with emerging global norms. In the most extreme form, in post-conflict settings with international peacekeeping forces, the international community may more-or-less impose women's participation through quotas as an essential component of post-conflict assistance. Afghanistan and Iraq, which both have adopted reserved seat quotas in their most recent post-conflict constitutions, serve as prime examples here (Bush 2011).

In the statistical models that follow, I operationalize implications from both the transnational set of variables related to inter-state diffusion processes, as well as a host of country-level variables that capture the domestic level explanations for quota adoption outlined above.

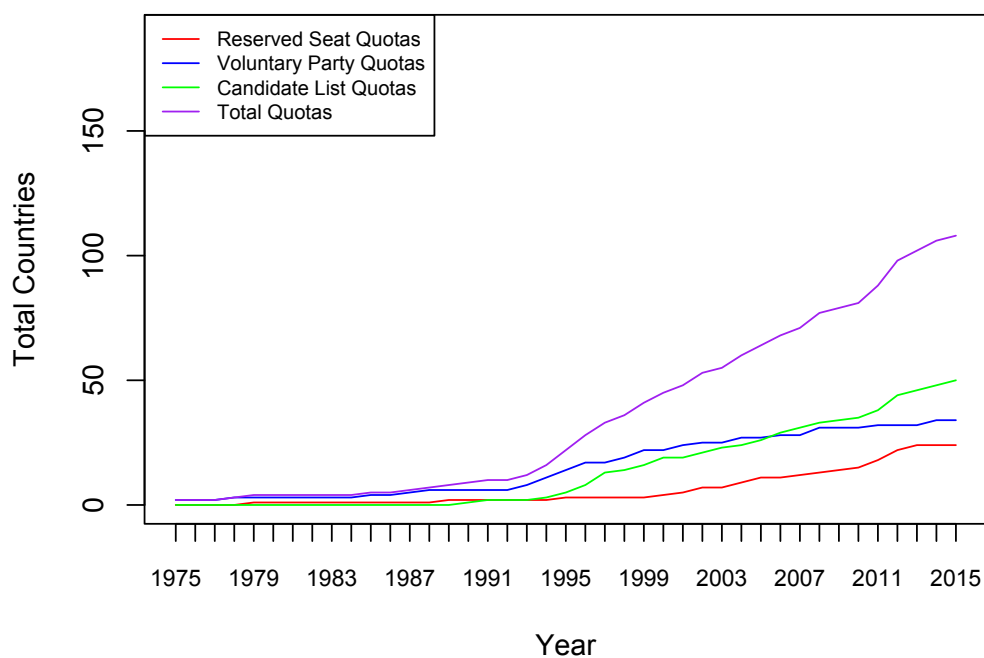
### **3. Data and Methods: A Social Network Approach**

One of the most pervasive problems in identifying diffusion processes is disentangling the effects of diffusion from the possibility that actors have similar responses to common shocks or shared institutional or cultural similarities – commonly referred to as “Galton’s problem.” Scholars often have difficulty distinguishing between the true interdependence of units’ actions and the impacts of spatially correlated domestic factors or that of interactions between unit-level factors and common exogenous shocks (Franzese/Hays 2008). One recent methodological advancement in the study of interdependence involves modeling networks formed by dyadic relationships between countries as an important determinant of commonalities between states (see Anselin/Cho 2002; Neumayer/Plümper 2012; Ward et al. 2011)

This type of modeling approach more accurately reflects the nature of international policy diffusion, which primarily relies on the idea that important aspects of social organization involve interactions between states. Related to quota diffusion, for instance, through network analysis I am able to test whether trade partners or countries with overlapping international organization memberships are more likely to share similar quota policies. In the models that follow, I first include a binary outcome variable representing any type of quota adoption, followed by specifications which model the likelihood that country-pair dyads will share the same quota policy type, including the absence of a quota policy as a distinct policy choice (see Solingen 2012).

I have collected data on states' quota type (reserved seat, candidate list, voluntary political party, or no quota) and year of adoption from The Quota Project.<sup>3</sup> The following graph shows the total number of adopters by quota type per year, as well as the aggregate number of quota adopters per year. Consistent with the quota literature outlined above, we see that the norm cascade of quota adoption (see Finnemore/Sikkink 1998) begins in the early 1990s, as states begin passing quota reforms at an increasingly rapid rate.

Figure 2: Number of Quota Adoptions, 1975-2015



Source: Author.

A social network approach to policy adoption considers countries as nodes and relationship between countries as edges (or vertices) connecting these nodes in a larger network. Formal network analysis typically encodes empirical information about linkages between nodes into a matrix. Nodes are listed on the rows and columns, and data describing connections between nodes are recorded as cell entries in the matrix, typically called a socio-matrix (Ward et al. 2011). To conduct a social network analysis of the emergence of these different quota policy types, I construct a series of socio-matrices in which countries represent the nodes of the network.<sup>4</sup> In the first set of models, I code country pairs positively if they have the same quota adopter versus non-adopter status. For instance, both the USA and India are non-adopters, and therefore have a county-pair dyad core of “1.” Similarly, both Uganda and Argentina are quota adopters (although

<sup>3</sup> A database kept by Stockholm University and International IDEA, The Quota Project keeps cross-sectional records on country-level quota systems.

<sup>4</sup> The sample size is 196, which includes all countries that existed both in 1996 and 2006 as well as a handful of independent states, such as Zanzibar and Kosovo.

they have different quota policy types), and I also code their country-pair dyad positively. Because Uganda and the US do not share a similar quota adoption status, their country-pair dyad is negative.

In the second set of models, the outcome variable is more nuanced and includes shared quota policy type by country-pair dyad. Here, if two countries have a shared policy out of the four main quota types – voluntary party quotas, candidate list quotas, reserved seat quotas, or no quota – I consider them members of the same group. As above, vertices represent shared quota type – a binary, undirected relationship. For instance, because Germany and South Africa both have voluntary party quotas, I mark their relationship on the socio-matrix as positive, however I code the Germany/Tanzania dyad negatively because they have different quota policy types (voluntary party quotas in the former, and reserved seats in the latter). For both sets of models, the first socio-matrix I construct shows the type of quota systems shared by countries in 2006 – a date for which there is reliable and up-to-date covariate data.

A time-series research design best captures mechanisms that might explain the rapid diffusion of quotas in the last decades. To model temporal trends, I construct a second socio-matrix, which represents the type of quota policy each country had in 1996. Including this time lag into my models sheds light on the covariates that are associated with a change in policy by 2006. The year 1996 makes an apt lag. In September 1995, delegates from 189 countries attended the Fourth World Conference on Women, which approved the Beijing Platform for Action. Under the mandate of the United Nations, the Platform recommended electoral gender quotas for member states to improve women's access to political decision-making, which many scholars cite as precipitating the rapid proliferation of quota adoption that followed.

I include the number of shared IGO membership, regional organization memberships, WINGO memberships, border contiguity, and trade flows as either directed or undirected dyadic data between country-pair dyads. The IGO data is from the Correlates of War (COW) dataset. It includes shared membership in 533 inter-governmental organizations and is based on data from the Yearbook of International Organizations (YIO). I further separate these data into IGOs with either a regional or international scope, as well as those that take women's rights as their primary mandate. I create the "shared WINGO membership variable" from the YIO data as compiled and coded by Jackie Smith in the Transnational Social Movement Organization Dataset.<sup>5</sup> The average number of shared WINGOs per country-pair dyad is 4.5. France and Belgium have the most WINGO memberships in common at 49 shared memberships. I create the "shared RO membership variable" based on the regional organizations listed in Börzel (2011: Table 1). The average number of shared RO memberships is 0.53. West African countries have the most shared regional memberships, and several country-pair dyads have seven RO memberships in common. I code the border contiguity data and trade flow data (operationalized as logged exports) from the COW database and the World Bank database respectively.

Related to the alternative accounts of quota adoption detailed above, I also include binary categorical domestic-level variables that indicate whether each country-pair dyad shares similar domestic features. Here I include the states' electoral system (data from the Inter-Parliamentary Union) and whether the state

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<sup>5</sup> These data include the number of shared WINGOs in 2003, the latest year in her sample. Data housed at ICPSR Data Verse.

invited outside election monitors to observe their last elections (data from Bush (2011)), which relates to the likelihood that states were coerced into including gender quotas in their post-conflict constitutions. I also include dyadic trade relations and dyad similarity in state levels of democracy. These data include the absolute difference in logged GDP per capita (data from the World Bank), absolute difference in logged ODA as a percentage of GNI (data from the World Bank), and absolute difference in polity score (data from the Polity IV Project). As an illustration, the USA/Germany country-pair dyad would have small absolute differences across these three economic and political measures, and the USA/Somalia dyad would have large absolute differences. Finally, I include dyadic-level differences on three measures of women's rights from the CIRI Human Rights Data Project. These data measure the extent to which women's economic, political, and social rights have been codified into national law, and again the absolute difference of these variables captured by each country-pair dyad represents how far two countries are from each other on each measure of gender equality.

#### 4. Results

I construct two sets of exponential random graph models (ERGM) (see Hunter et al. 2008; Cranmer et al. 2012), which capture the probability that any given country-pair dyad has the same type of quota policy in 2006. Although the cross-sectional ERGMs provide a snapshot of all country-pair dyads in 2006, the model specifications do not assume the networks are static. Rather, the snapshot represents the accumulation of a dynamic process over time, which has evolved from the covariates included in the model. The coefficients estimate the relative frequency in the observed network of each substructure in the model in comparison to a network with randomly assigned ties. The models analyze which structures in the observed graph are significantly more likely than would occur in the null model, but the position of any given node is subject to stochastic change (Lubell et al. 2012). The p-values associated with each covariate, then, can be interpreted similarly to standard regression models: the likelihood that the arrangement of network ties observed in the dependent variable would occur if they had developed at random.

The first set of models groups countries with any type of quota policy into the category of "adopter" and those without a policy into the category of "non-adopter." Model 1.1 in Table 1 displays the regression results for a purely cross-sectional model of shared adoption status in 2006. Model 1.2 displays results from a specification that models the change in shared adoption status from 1996 to 2006.

The second set of models takes shared policy type as the outcome variable. Model 2.1 displays the 2006 cross-sectional model, and by controlling for shared policy type ten years prior, Model 2.2 displays results associated with the change in shared policy status over the subsequent decade.

Table 1: ERGM Results. Dependent Variable: Shared Quota Policy (Adoption versus Non-adoption), by Country-Pair Dyads

	<i>Dependent Variable: Shared Quota Adoption</i>	
	1.1	1.2
Edges	0.276*** (0.061)	-1.318*** (0.074)
No. Shared IGOs	-0.008*** (0.002)	-0.002 (0.002)
No. Shared ROs	0.018 (0.016)	-0.032* (0.018)
No. Shared WINGOs	0.008* (0.004)	0.029*** (0.005)
Shared Border	0.281*** (0.096)	0.204** (0.102)
Logged Exports	0.011* (0.007)	0.007 (0.007)
Similarity: Electoral System	0.224*** (0.031)	0.242*** (0.033)
Similarity: Last Election Observed	0.045 (0.029)	0.086*** (0.031)
Abs. Diff.: Lg. GDP per Capita	-0.001 (0.010)	0.050*** (0.011)
Abs. Diff.: ODA/GNI	0.002 (0.001)	-0.002 (0.001)
Abs. Diff.: Polity	-0.022*** (0.003)	-0.008*** (0.003)
Abs. Diff.: Women's Econ. Rights	-0.001 (0.023)	0.097*** (0.025)
Abs. Diff.: Women's Pol. Rights	-0.113*** (0.024)	-0.001 (0.026)
Abs. Diff.: Women's Social Rights	0.026 (0.018)	0.023 (0.019)
Shared Quota Policy in 1996		1.601*** (0.035)
Akaike Inf. Crit.	26,335.070	23,987.170
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	26,445.080	24,105.040
No. Obs. (Country-Pair Dyads)	38,416	38,416

Note: \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Source: Author.



Table 2: ERGM Results. Dependent Variable: Shared Quota Policy Type (Reserved Seat Quotas versus Legislated Candidate Quotas versus Voluntary Political Party Quotas), by Country-Pair Dyads

	<i>Dependent Variable: Shared Quota Policy Type</i>	
	2.1	2.2
Edges	0.466*** (0.061)	-1.718*** (0.079)
No. Shared IGOs	-0.011*** (0.002)	-0.005** (0.002)
No. Shared ROs	0.016 (0.017)	-0.042** (0.018)
No. Shared WINGOs	-0.015*** (0.004)	0.017*** (0.005)
Shared Border	0.471*** (0.096)	0.407*** (0.107)
Logged Exports	0.040*** (0.007)	0.041*** (0.008)
Similarity: Electoral System	0.212*** (0.031)	0.230*** (0.035)
Similarity: Last Election Observed	-0.052* (0.030)	0.010 (0.033)
Abs. Diff.: Lg. GDP per Capita	-0.054*** (0.011)	0.015 (0.012)
Abs. Diff.: ODA/GNI	-0.003** (0.001)	-0.010*** (0.002)
Abs. Diff.: Polity	-0.035*** (0.003)	-0.021*** (0.003)
Abs. Diff.: Women's Econ. Rights	-0.00001 (0.024)	0.137*** (0.026)
Abs. Diff.: Women's Pol. Rights	-0.137*** (0.024)	0.013 (0.027)
Abs. Diff.: Women's Social Rights	0.016 (0.018)	0.054*** (0.020)
Shared Quota Policy in 1996		2.153*** (0.040)
Akaike Inf. Crit.	26,120.470	22,497.080
Bayesian Inf. Crit.	26,230.480	22,614.940
No. Obs. (Country-Pair Dyads)	38,416	38,416

Note: \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Source: Author.

To assist in interpreting the meaning of the logistic regression coefficients, Table 3 displays the odds ratios associated with each significant covariate across the four models.

*Table 3: Odds Ratios of Significant Predictors of Shared 2006 Quota Policy*

	<b>1.1</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>2.2</b>
No. Shared IGOs	0.992	0.998	0.989	0.995
No. Shared ROs	NS	0.969	NS	0.955
No. Shared WINGOs	1.008	1.030	0.985	1.017
Shared Border	1.324	1.227	1.599	1.496
Logged Exports	1.011	NS	1.040	1.041
Similarity: Electoral System	1.251	1.274	1.237	1.260
Similarity: Last Election Observed	NS	1.090	0.950	NS
Abs. Diff.: Lg. GDP per Capita	NS	1.051	0.948	NS
Abs. Diff.: ODA/GNI	NS	NS	0.997	0.990
Abs. Diff.: Polity	0.979	0.992	0.965	0.979
Abs. Diff.: Women's Econ. Rights	NS	1.102	NS	1.159
Abs. Diff.: Women's Pol. Rights	0.893	NS	0.875	NS
Abs. Diff.: Women's Social Rights	NS	NS	NS	1.013
Shared Quota Policy in 1996	-	4.959	-	8.582

*Source:* Author

These results contain several interesting findings. First, counter to the expectations posited in Hypothesis 2 and Hypothesis 3, across all four models, as the number of shared memberships in IGOs and ROs increases, the likelihood of sharing a similar quota adoption status or a similar type of quota policy decreases, although the effect size is quite small. I find mixed support for Hypothesis 2a. The number of shared WINGOs has a positive and significant, albeit substantively small, association with shared adoption status (Models 1.1 and 1.2). Related to shared policy type, I find that the number of shared WINGO memberships is negatively, although minimally, associated with the probability of a shared quota policy in the cross-section of cases in 2006. When modeling the change in shared quota policy between 1996 (after the Beijing Conference) and 2006, however, we see that WINGO membership has a positive association with shared quota policies between country dyads. When holding all other covariates constant, a change in one standard deviation of shared WINGO membership (5.2 shared memberships – associated with, for instance, the approximate move from the Bolivia/Burkina Faso country-pair dyad to the Bolivia/Australia country-pair dyad) is associated with a nine percent increase in the likelihood of a shared quota policy.

Across models, I find the strongest support for Hypothesis 1, related to shared quota adoption and shared policy type as functions of geographic proximity. Although the coefficients are positive, significant, and substantially meaningful for Models 1.1 and 1.2, these results reach greater magnitude related to shared quota policy type. In the cross-sectional model here, Model 2.1, countries that share a border (either a land border or less than 150 miles by water) are 60 percent more likely to share a similar type of quota policy

than non-neighboring countries. In the ten years following the Beijing Conference, neighboring countries are 50 percent more likely to adopt similar quota policies than non-neighboring countries.

The results associated with several other covariates are also noteworthy. As expected, shared electoral system is a very strong and significant positive predictor of shared quota type. International trade is largely associated with an increase in the likelihood of shared quota policies. As logged exports increase by one standard deviation, the likelihood that two countries will share a quota policy increases by 11 percent. Related to a state's position in the global economy, the results are mixed. I find that, as a cross-section, as countries move further apart by one standard deviation in logged GDP per capita, they are nine percent less likely to share a quota policy. However, when just examining the change after the Beijing conference, one standard deviation increase in the absolute difference is actually associated with a small increased likelihood of shared quota policies (four percent increase). Similarity in ODA levels is not a significant predictor of shared quota adoption versus non-adoption, but rather a significant predictor of shared policy type. In both the cross-sectional and panel model, as countries move further apart in terms of ODA as a percentage of GNI, they are less likely to share quota policies, with effect sizes associated with four percent in the cross-sectional model, and ten percent when modeling the change between 1996 and 2006.

The coefficients associated with the absolute difference in country-pair dyads polity scores indicate that states that are least similar in their democracy scores are also less likely to share similar quota policies, or put conversely, countries with similar levels of democracy have similar quota policies (across all models). Related to shared policy type, in the cross-sectional model, one standard deviation change in polity score (six points on the 21 point scale or, for instance, a change from Algeria's score to Colombia's score) is associated with a 23 percent increase in the likelihood of shared quota policy – and a 12 percentage point increased likelihood in the model of quota policy change. Across the four models, the coefficients associated with women's political, economic, and social rights are either non-significant or mixed, and paint an inconclusive picture about their role in promoting shared quota policies.

## 5. Discussion

What do these results tell us about the processes behind the diffusion of electoral gender quota policies? Related first to transnational processes, I find that countries that share borders are significantly more likely to also share quota policies as compared to non-neighboring countries. Indeed, even when controlling for domestic features that are also geographically clustered, a shared border is the strongest predictor of quota design (including non-adoption), both within a cross-section of cases in 2006 as well as when modeling change in quota design during a period of rapid global quota expansion. These findings suggest that political elites look close to home when evaluating the perceived substantive policy benefits versus the political costs associated with quota adoption. It also supports the claim that local activists are using comparisons to the experiences of neighboring states in advocacy attempts around promoting quota policies at home.

I find support for the hypothesis that shared membership in women's international non-governmental organizations promotes quota adoption, although only mixed support for the hypothesis that shared membership encourages shared policy type. This suggests that women's organizations may promote quotas in general to increase women's political representation, but are less vocal on lobbying for specific policy designs.

My mixed findings related to the role of ROs and INGOs in promoting policy adoption indicate that these organizations may have limited direct effects on quota policy adoption and quota policy design. Certainly, one possibility is that these groups promote general standards of gender equality, but do not promote quotas for women in politics as a specific recommendation. Moreover, even when these groups do specifically promote quotas, member states take their own approach to policy design and look to their neighbors for cues in this area. To return to the running example of SADC, the regional organization that has perhaps been the most active in promoting gender quotas among member states, we see that whereas SADC groups have been quite successful in pushing a regional consensus around a norm of including women in political decision-making, lobbying efforts often center around targets, rather than specific policy designs. Indeed, Figure 1 reveals that even within SADC member countries, quota policy designs cluster by region. Voluntary quotas are the most popular in the southern-most part of the region, reserved seats are most popular in the east, and candidate lists are most common in the central states. This finding suggests an argument parallel to that proposed by Acharya (2004), related to the way regional organizations localize emerging global norms to fit existing regional models – however, in this instance, we see clusters of member states within regional bodies adopting norms promoted by regional bodies in ways that correspond with sub-regional standards and norms. The null finding related to quota adoption, however, also suggests that shared membership in ROs is not sufficient to promote adoption in itself. Further distinguishing ROs by their different mandate types may reveal ways in which overlapping membership affects domestic social policy, such as quotas.

Whereas the above accounts of norm localization relate largely to processes of rational learning and normative emulation that domestic actors engage in based on particular reference groups, I also find some suggestive evidence that processes of competition may promote quota adoption and design as well. Namely, I find that countries similarly situated within foreign aid networks have similar quota policies. This finding is consistent with the notion that poor countries may adopt similar quota designs to appeal to Western donors, as they compete for ODA markets against similarly situated states.

I have found significant and robust evidence that states adopt similar types of quota policies as neighboring states, and I have speculated on the ways in which this evidence may relate to causal mechanisms. It is important to note, however, that whereas the four-mechanism schema that has now become standard in the diffusion literature is useful in creating a theoretical framework and common language around diffusion processes, there are limitations to this typology. First, studies of diffusion remain disparate in their operationalization of mechanisms (see Maggetti/Gilardi 2016). For instance, as I have noted, positive correlations between quota adoption and foreign aid dependence may provide evidence that states are competing with one another over ODA markets (competition), or that powerful states promote Western notions of gender equality by signaling that quotas may be associated with increased aid (coercion). Second, quota campaigns are clearly fomented by multiple transnational and domestic processes (often even within single

cases), which may make stylistic attempts to adjudicate between causal mechanisms ring false to careful observers. Third, recent work has highlighted how diffusion mechanisms themselves are often interdependent. Again the example of foreign aid in promoting quota adoption is illustrative. Political elites may learn about the costs and benefits of adopting quotas (learning) as an effective signal of gender equality and democratic legitimacy, as transnational feminist groups work to establish quotas as a global norm (emulation/socialization). Survey experiments testing elites' and citizens' responses to different messages related to quota adoption is a promising area of future research here, as it would provide micro-level evidence to the growing scholarship on quota adoption.

## 6. Conclusion

While controlling for political, economic, and cultural features that also cluster geographically, I find strong evidence that the proliferation of quota campaigns does indeed involve interdependent processes between states. This study has found strong evidence that during times of rapid global policy expansion, states look to their neighbors for cues about whether and how to adopt a host of potential policy designs into their domestic settings. My findings indicate that rather than transnational networks mimicking or even replacing geographic proximity, domestic actors view neighboring states as the most visible and relevant reference group when considering policy options.

The findings I present here point to several possible areas of future research. First, electoral gender quotas, which originated within Western European states, have been reinterpreted in the global south in new ways that extend beyond European models. In some instances, European countries have adopted new policy features (for instance, legislated rules about the placement of women on electoral lists) based on the experiences of non-European countries, creating an interesting pattern of south-north policy diffusion. An extension of the work I present here might examine how regional organizations influence each other in the type of gender quota policies they promote – that is, the ways in which regional organizations act as recipients of policy ideas in the global system.

Second, the origins of domestic quota policies have definite ramifications for the effects of the policy once in place. Some research has indicated that quota policies that stem from regional or international pressure rather than the result of a sustained grassroots effort are perceived as less democratically legitimate (Clayton 2014). This may have important consequences on how the beneficiaries of these policies are perceived (symbolic representation) as well as their ability to use their newfound legislative positions in meaningful ways (substantive representation). A fruitful area of future work would be to link processes of policy diffusion to particular substantive or symbolic outcomes of quota policies once in place.

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